

"Spite" (McCobb-Dodge) House
Deadman's Point
Rockport vicinity
Knox County
Maine

HABS No. ME-75

In Addendum to
7/sheets (1960)

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

"SPITE" (McCOBB-DODGE) HOUSEHABS
ME

Address: Deadman's Point, Rockport vicinity, Knox County, 7-ROCKPORT
Maine. Moved from Phippsburg Center, Maine. 1-

Present Owner
and Occupant: Donald D. Dodge, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Present Use: Summer residence.

Brief Statement
of Significance: "Spite" House, so called because of its origin,
was built in 1806 by Thomas McCobb at Phippsburg
Center. McCobb thought his mother had schemed to
deprive him of his inheritance, and to spite her,
made this building to overshadow her own residence.
In 1925 it was moved by Donald D. Dodge from
Phippsburg to its present location by barge.
It is an outstanding example of early Federal
architecture.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATIONA. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Thomas McCobb and
heirs, 1806-1882; Captain James Drummond, 1882- ; Mrs. Frank
Ortiz, 1913; Dr. Adelbert F. Williams, 1913-1925; Donald D. Dodge,
1925 to present.

2. Date of erection: 1806; additions 1925-1926.

3. Architect unknown, but may have been either Nicholas
Codd, or Samuel Melcher of Brunswick (1775-1862), admirer of
Samuel McIntyre of Salem.

4. Builder unknown.

5. Alterations and additions: Ell removed 1925. House
moved by barge from Phippsburg Center to Rockport, 1925 by Dresser
Company with Arthur B. Tingley of Portland as foreman. Captain John
Snow, Rockland, directed the water transportation.

After the moving, the building was altered and added to in 1925-
1926 by Architects Tilden and Register of Philadelphia and Builder
W. H. Glover, Rockland, Maine; but their additions are not included
in this survey. Modification of the house included reversal of the
main stairs, removal of secondary stairs, addition of interior

doorways, closing two windows and modifying interior partitions to allow passage to appendages, removal of mantel from Room 2 to Room 3, addition of decorative panels on the west elevation, and the installation of mechanical equipment.

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B. Important Old Views: D. D. Dodge Collection of photographs^{7-ROCP.V} and newspaper accounts of house moving, 1925; Boston Sunday Post, August 2, 1925; Portland Press Herald, June 19, 1925; Maine Colonial Series, drawing and photo of doorway (pres. east elevation) by A. J. Harriman, May 1925.

C. Sources of Information

1. D. D. Dodge Collection, Rockport, Maine, including Architect Marmaduke Tilden's drawings.

2. National Park Service, Philadelphia.

3. Downeast Magazine, August 1960, article by Mary Meeker Cramer and Isabel Currier with footnote by Ambrose C. Cramer, AIA, pp. 24-29, 48.

D. Other Material on Spite House: Richard Pratt; The Second Treasury of Early American Homes; 1945; pp. 15-19.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: Outstanding example of early New England Federal style. This survey is concerned only with central block of the house and does not include 1925 appendages.

2. Condition of fabric: Excellent; modifications in character with the original.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: 44'-7" x 39'-6".

2. Foundations: Original granite foundation sills on 1925 concrete footing.

3. Wall construction: Wood frame, reputedly brickfilled; horizontal, lapped wood siding; applied pilasters at corners; wood bargeboard; wood panels under second floor windows decorated with swags (only those on east elevation original).

4. Stoops: West stoop, 1925 revision; east and north stoops, granite originals. Unmolded nosings.

5. Chimneys: Four original red brick, common bond chimneys, two on each end.

6. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors; three original: East doorway is arched with plain soffit; radial metal-tracery fanlight; six-panel door. The frontispiece has paneled pilasters and incised-wood, scroll brackets which support a cornice with miniature modillions. Other doorways similar.

b. Windows and shutters: Original, wood, double-hung sash, six over six lights; louvered wood shutters with curled shutter dogs.

7. Roof: Standing-seam, metal, hip roof; original roofing was wood shingle.

a. Cornice: Simple wood modillion cornice.

b. Balustrade: Plain, square spindles, closely spaced; square, paneled corner posts; curved cross bracing behind spindles.

c. Cupola: Octagonal; "paneled" pilasters; windows double-hung sash, six over six lights; simple wood cornice with modillions; cupola surmounted by metal eagle (removable); wood balustrade at edge of roof similar to one on main roof; oculus into stair well.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: 1st floor - four rooms, central entry and stair hall; 2nd floor - four rooms and bath, stair halls, hall to appendages.

2. Stairway: Open-newel, double-run, from first floor to cupola with half-circle of risers joining two runs; spindles straight, square, two per tread; molded nosings; open string with flat, scroll, end brackets; scroll newel.

3. Flooring: Wood boards 5"-8", painted; stair hall floor painted diagonal black and grey squares; baseboard marbleized (not original).

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Paper, including two copies of original Adams paper on plaster and 2" wood planks; wood wainscot; painted plaster ceiling.

5. Doorways and doors: Original six-panel wood doors; doorways and trim original with fluted pilasters and plain entablature.

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6. Trim: Mantel in Room 3, originally in Room 2, is only original mantel in house; mantels, with pilasters and entablature, both paneled, are mounted on projecting chimney, return at the corners as do those of some other houses in this area; paneled wainscot original throughout; folding (4-fold, 12-panel) interior shutters except in Rooms 6, 8 and 14, where sliding shutters occur; cornice; arch spanning stair hall at foot of stair, paneled on pilaster and soffitt.

7. Hardware: Original knocks on east and west doors; originally, box locks on exterior doors; mortise locks on interior doors only; interior locks reputedly original.

8. Lighting: Electric.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: On wooded Deadman's Point, facing on Penobscot Bay, east-west orientation.

2. Enclosures: Extensive wooden fence, modern.

3. Walks, driveways: Modern.

4. Landscaping: Extensive trees, shrubs, lawns, and borders.

Prepared by F. Blair Reeves, Architect
August 1960

AND Robert E. Cooper, Architect
January 1961

National Park Service